

June 2, 2006

# Hurricane Watch

Eglin Eagle Special Supplement

What have we  
learned from  
Katrina?

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Hurricane season 2006

# Are you ready?

■ Don't forget about  
those pets when  
evacuating

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# Katrina taught all involved lesson in hurricane preparation

STORY AND PHOTO  
BY MARANDA RIMES  
STAFF WRITER

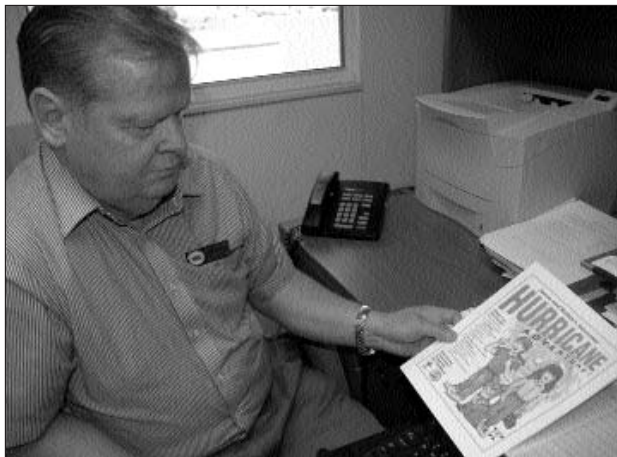
The United States experienced the sixth-strongest Atlantic Hurricane ever recorded in August, 2005, devastating land 100 miles from its center and causing damages reaching \$115 billion.

Hurricane Katrina changed the coasts of Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama forever. Our neighbors at Keesler AFB, Miss., took a direct hit.

"The main lesson I learned is to not take a storm for granted," said Capt. (Dr.) Shawna Hoffert, 96th Dental Squadron, who evacuated from Keesler to Columbus, Miss., and eventually moved here. "The might of rain and wind was comparable to a tornado taking out an entire coastline," Captain Hoffert said. "We kept saying that it looked like an atom bomb had exploded linearly."

"Prepare. Take heed to the warnings and evacuations. Know where you would go if you do have to evacuate, and have a plan if you have to stay there awhile. I was lucky because I could access my bank online and make arrangements to pay bills and get cash. Some of my fellow residents from Keesler had problems getting back into the area."

The Airman and Family Readiness Center facilitated close to 600 displaced military



**James Helms, Airman and Family Readiness Center community readiness consultant, reviews a children's guide to hurricane facts in preparation for the 2006 hurricane season. The pamphlet addresses what hurricanes are, how to track a hurricane and possible hazards of a hurricane so children can understand what may be going on during a storm.**

members and retirees in the weeks following Hurricane Katrina.

Volunteers became a critical part of the post-hurricane response enabling the Airman and Family Readiness Center to field calls from active-duty, retired and Department of Defense evacuees.

"We opened our doors 24 hours a day, and set up a communications center to help evacuees with all of our available resources," said Lisa Splinter, communications readiness technician. "We depended on our volunteers to help us answer the

phones and field questions. We helped provide them with food and shelter, as well as put them in contact with other service agencies."

Other services and agencies included Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Red Cross, Women Infant and Children, Social Security, the United Way, gift cards and food stamps.

"All of our volunteers were provided an information packet addressing how to answer phone calls and who to direct them to," Mrs. Splinter said. "We knew that many callers

were under duress so we advised our volunteers to be courteous, warm and empathetic."

Before ending the phone call, volunteers referred callers to personnelists, so they could be accounted for and to ensure all concerns such as food, water and shelter were met.

Captain Hoffert said she learned that if someone needed help, it was available — they simply have to ask.

"I am still amazed by the generosity and widespread distribution of service and aid-oriented organizations that were available for us," she said.

Tech Sgt. Pamela King-Hasberry, Family Readiness manager, said she is entering her third hurricane season, and feels confident the center is ready, due to the amount of hands-on experience they have received.

"One of the reasons we are more prepared this year is because we have the extra phone lines up and ready to go from our call center last year," she said. "The communication's center just has to activate them when the time is necessary."

Several hurricane readiness classes are available for military members and their families. One class offered to children helps them learn how to help their parents during a hurricane, as well as how to track a storm surge. For more information on these classes call 882-9060.

Captain Hoffert said she

would suggest people prepare for a hurricane by gathering important documents in an area where they can be quickly located, and consider making a list of the items most likely missed if they were destroyed.

"For me, it was my brand new wedding pictures," she said. "I had left the digital master copies in Biloxi, Miss., and without those I never would have been able to have looked through that day again."

Staff members of the Airman and Family Readiness Center encourage military members to be proactive in preparing for this year's hurricane season.

"Because volunteers played such a key role in helping those who needed our support after Katrina, it would be nice to have some volunteers lined up if the time comes again," said Mrs. Splinter.

Anyone who wishes to volunteer can e-mail Mrs. Splinter at 96mssdpf@eglin.af.mil, and type post-hurricane volunteer in the subject line.

"We at Keesler are extremely grateful to all our Air Force family for the assistance and aid you have provided over the past difficult weeks," said Brig. Gen. William Lord, 81st Training Wing Commander at Keesler AFB. "Your assistance, your kind words and prayers helped us make it through a tremendously trying time."

## 2006 Hurricane names

Alberto	Leslie
Beryl	Michael
Chris	Nadine
Debby	Oscar
Ernesto	Patty
Florence	Rafael
Gordon	Sandy
Helene	Tony
Isaac	Valerie
Joyce	William
Kirk	

## On the cover

Hurricane Opal devastated the Gulf Coast in 1995, and with Katrina still fresh on the minds of many residents, preparation has become even more important.



## Eglin shelters

*Eglin shelters are for Department of Defense identification card holders. The installation commander approves the release of non-mission critical military civilian personnel from duty.*

In the event of an evacuation, multiple shelters on base may be opened. Information about designated shelters can be obtained by calling the 96th Civil Engineer Readiness Flight at 882-3172.

If shelters are opened, a pet shelter will also be available. Pet owners are required to register their pets at the fitness center.

Pet registration begins during HURCON 2.

## Okaloosa County hurricane shelters

*Safety levels are not guaranteed at any shelter. Shelter locations are selected because they are outside of hurricane surge zones and are of generally sturdy construction.*

**Baker School**  
1369 14th Street  
Baker, Fla.

**Davidson Middle School**  
6261 Old Bethel Road  
Crestview, Fla.

Hurricane shelters are not automatically opened during an evacuation. Listen to local radio stations for current updates.

# 2006 may be active year for storms

BY MARANDA RIMES  
STAFF WRITER

Hurricane awareness week kicked off Sunday, and the latest forecast for 2006 calls for 17 named storms, nine hurricanes and five intense or major hurricanes for the Atlantic hurricane season.

Hurricane season officially started June 1, and there are several measures the Eglin community can take to prepare.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency advises people to plan an evacuation route, learn safe routes inland, make arrangements for pets and develop an emergency communication plan among other things. When advised to leave the area for a mandatory hurricane evacuation, Eglin officials remind people to monitor television or radio broadcasts for the National Hurricane Center's latest forecast and stay in contact with their supervisors.

If communication at the base has been rendered inoperable, base employees and residents may dial (800) 435-9941 at Randolph AFB, Texas. For the safety of military members and their families, it is essential to heed all warnings issued by base and local officials.

In the event of a hurricane, updates will be posted at the main entrances to

If communication at the base has been rendered inoperable, base employees and residents may dial (800) 435-9941 at Randolph AFB, Texas for up-to-date information.

buildings on base, alerting personnel of the current hurricane alert status here. During an evacuation, military members are advised to pack sufficient clothing, bedding, medical supplies and enough food and water to sustain their families for at least three days.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency also lists the following items to have on hand before the hurricane season starts:

- Disaster supplies
- Flashlight
- Portable battery-operated radio
- Extra batteries
- First-aid kit and manual
- Emergency food and water
- Non-electric can opener
- Essential medicines
- Cash and credit cards
- Sturdy shoes

Servicemembers are also advised to ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact," because after a disaster it is often easier to call

long distance. Make sure everyone knows the name, address and phone number of the contact person.

"According to Dr. William Gray, Colorado State University, there is an 81 percent chance the U.S. will be hit by a hurricane this year," said Maj. James B. Mackey, 46th Weather Squadron operations officer. "However, it is far too early to specify where that may occur. The most prudent thing for everyone at Eglin to do is be prepared just in case."

The following definitions for the various levels of evacuation apply:

**Mandatory** — All personnel here will evacuate, except designated ride-out-crews. Mission-critical personnel will be on duty during the evacuation period. Non-mission critical personnel will be placed on administrative leave.

**Recommended** — Personnel in coastal areas should move inland or seek shelter. The installation commander has authorized administrative leave for all non-mission critical personnel (category 2 and low category 3 storms).

**Voluntary** — Personnel in low lying areas may wish to move inland or to shelters. A liberal leave policy will be in effect for non-mission critical personnel (category 2 and category 3 storms).

## Preparation key in protecting homes

BY 1ST LT.  
KRISTEN D. DUNCAN  
96TH AIR BASE WING  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Whether inclement weather drives base personnel to evacuate or to shelter themselves inside their homes, there are preparations that should be made to protect valuables at home.

To adequately prepare a home, follow the home preparation checklist of ABCs in the Full Spectrum Threat Response Handbook: anchor, brace, cover and strap.

Check the yard for things that could become wind-borne. Bring these things inside and ask neighbors to do the same. Trim and anchor down plants and trees, and harness free-standing fixtures in the yard. Also make sure the house has a wall-to-foundation connection with anchor bolts and rebar.

After the outside of the house has been secured, the next step is to bolt all doors with 1-inch foot and head



Courtesy photo

**An oak tree blown over by Hurricane Ivan in September 2004 lies on Building 249 on base. Protecting one's home may help prevent the damage hurricanes can cause.**

bolts, and reinforce the garage door and tracks with center supports. Strap rafters and trusses to walls with hurricane straps or clips.

Cover all large windows and doors with impact-resistant shutters or replace them with impact-resistant laminated window and door

systems if possible. Make sure all doors and windows are properly caulked and weather stripped. Also, be sure the roof covering is rated for hurricane-force winds.

Families who live on-base are responsible for preparing their own home and yard before a storm hits,

said Keli Martin, housing maintenance office controller. Plywood is not recommended for covering windows because it is at the resident's expense, and they must incur the cost of any structural damage from screws or holes.

The maintenance office only boards up the six or seven waterfront homes on Osceola Circle and the general's house at Camp Pinchot, said Martin.

By following these outdoor tips, the whole community will be better prepared during hurricane season. For residents near coastal waters or in high flood zones, there are some indoor preparations that many forget to include on their checklists.

Move items on the floor to at least table height or bed height to protect them from flood damage.

Anything in a closet floor or on low shelves in a bookcase are vulnerable.

Learning from Hurricane Katrina, it is also important to check on flood insurance.

## Emergency and Information contacts

### Eglin information

Evacuation Hotline	(800) 435-9941
Eglin Legal Office	882-4611
Air Force Aid Society	882-4489
Airman and Family	
Readiness Center	882-9060
Eglin Red Cross	882-5848
96th ABW Public Affairs	882-3931
Disaster Preparedness	882-3173
Pet Welfare Center	678-5066
East/West Gate Reader Boards	882-3931

### Hospitals

Eglin Emergency Room	883-8227
FWB Medical Center	863-7607
Sacred Heart	278-3000
Twin Cities Hospital	678-4131
North Okaloosa Medical Center	689-8152
Gulf Breeze Hospital	934-2000
Destin Emergency Care Center	837-9194

### Police and Sheriff's Departments

Argyle	892-9730
Crestview	682-2055
Destin	651-7400
North Bay	897-3689
FWB	833-9546
Niceville	729-4030
North Okaloosa Sheriff's Office	689-5666
Shalimar	651-1115
South Okaloosa Sheriff's Office	651-7400
Valparaiso	729-5400

### Fire Departments

Crestview	682-6121
DeFuniak Springs	892-9730
Destin	837-8413
FWB	833-9565
Mary Esther	243-5632
Niceville	729-4050
Valparaiso	729-5410

### Utilities

Gulf Power	(800) 225-5797
CHELCO	(800) 342-0990
Okaloosa Gas	729-4700
Sprint	611
Cox Cable	862-0175
Time Warner Cable	892-3155
Valparaiso Communications	729-5402

### Radio Stations

#### Emergency Broadcast Stations

1260 AM  
99.5 FM

#### Fort Walton Beach

WFTW 1260 AM  
WZNS 96.5 FM  
WKSM 99.5 FM  
WNCV 100.3 FM  
WMXZ 103.1 FM  
WYZB 105.5 FM

#### Pensacola

WUWF 88.1 FM  
WYCL 101.5 FM

#### Destin

WWRK 92.1 FM  
WAVB 102.1 FM  
WMXZ 103.1 FM





## Weather terms to know

■ **Tropical disturbance:** A moving area of thunderstorms in the tropics that maintains its identity for 24 hours or more.

■ **Tropical depression:** Rotary circulation at the ocean’s surface. Highest constant wind speed is 38 mph (33 knots).

■ **Tropical storm:** Distinct rotary circulation, constant wind speed ranges 39-73 mph (34-63 knots).

■ **Hurricane:** Pronounced rotary circulation, constant wind speed of 74 mph (64 knots).

■ **Small-craft cautionary statements:** When a tropical cyclone threatens a coastal area, small-craft operators are advised to remain in port or not to venture into open sea.

■ **Gale warnings:** May be issued when winds of 39-54 mph (34-47 knots) are expected.

■ **Storm warnings:** May be issued when winds of 55-73 mph (48-63 knots) are expected. If a hurricane is expected to strike a coastal area, gale or storm warnings won’t usually precede hurricane warnings.

■ **Hurricane watch:** Is issued for a coastal area when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.

■ **Hurricane warning:** Is issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less. Hurricane conditions include winds of 74 mph (64 knots) and/or dangerously high tides and waves. Actions for protection of life and property should begin immediately when the warning is issued.

■ **Flash flood watch:** A flash flood is possible in the area. Stay alert.

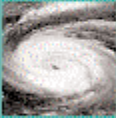
■ **Flash flood warning:** A flash flood is imminent; take immediate action.

■ **Tornadoes:** The extreme weather conditions that create hurricanes can sometimes spawn tornadoes. Although the tornadoes are not as strong as those produced in the midwestern part of the United States, they can produce severe damage and casualties. If a tornado is reported in the area, a warning will be issued.

### Hurcon 4: Alert

#### Hurricane Condition Four (Alert Phase)

Has been declared by the 95th Air Base Wing commander



Destructive winds of 50 knots (58 mph) or greater are possible within 72 hours

Seventy-two hours prior to the forecast arrival of 50-knot sustained winds or greater. Stock up emergency supplies. Copy important papers and phone numbers; store in storm-proof place. Individuals evacuating should decide now where to go.

### Hurcon 3: Preparation

#### Hurricane Condition Three (Preparation Phase)

Has been declared by the 95th Air Base Wing commander



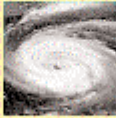
Destructive winds of 50 knots (58 mph) or greater are possible within 48 hours

Forty-eight hours prior to the forecast arrival of 50-knot sustained winds or greater. Monitor storm reports on local radio and television stations. Bring in lawn furniture, trash cans, potted plants and other loose objects. Individuals planning to evacuate should know the route they will take and consider leaving before an evacuation order is issued.

### Hurcon 2: Final preparation

#### Hurricane Condition Two (Final Preparation Phase)

Has been declared by the 95th Air Base Wing commander



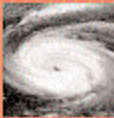
Destructive winds of 50 knots (58 mph) or greater are possible within 24 hours

Twenty-four hours prior to the forecast arrival of 50-knot sustained winds or greater. Listen constantly to storm reports. Board windows and glass doors. Turn refrigerator and freezer to their highest setting; freeze water in jugs. Fill sinks and tubs with water for bathing and sanitary purposes. Residents on high ground away from beaches should consider riding out the storm.

### Hurcon 1: Secure

#### Hurricane Condition One (Secure Phase)

Has been declared by the 95th Air Base Wing commander



Destructive winds of 50 knots (58 mph) or greater are possible within 12 hours

Twelve hours prior to the forecast arrival of 50-knot sustained winds or greater. Remain indoors.



# Make sure pets have hurricane plan, too

By MARANDA RIMES  
STAFF WRITER

The car has gas, important documents are in a waterproof container, flashlights, batteries and non-perishable food items are packed and ready...but what are you going to do with your pet?

Eglin officials remind military members to not leave pets behind during an evacuation.

In the event shelters are opened on base, pet owners are required to register their pets during HURCON 2 at a designated shelter.

"The biggest problem I see during an evacuation is pet owners don't have a plan," said Lt. Col. Scot Shively, pet welfare publicity chairman. "(Military members) should leave early and take their pets," he said. "Hotel rooms run out fast, and not all hotels take pets."

Pets may not be allowed into emergency shelters for health and space reasons. The local humane society is available to provide information on local animal shelters. Local shelters who do accept pets require owners to have proof their pets are current on all vaccinations. These records may be obtained from a veterinarian.

The Eglin Pet Welfare Center houses close to 25 dogs and 50 cats at a time, all of which must be evacuated during mandatory evacuations. During the last mandatory evacuation the animals were accepted at an animal shelter in Niceville.

A pet survival kit may include items such as proper identification, immunization records, ample supply of food and water, a carrier or cage, medications, muzzle and leash. Another tip is to take a current photograph of your pet to use if you are unintentionally separated.

The American Humane Association advises pet owners to place contact information, including the name of an out-of-state contact on your pets' identification tags, microchip registrations and licenses.

According to the Humane Society, in addition to the trauma experienced by evacuees who are forced to abandon their animal companions and the subsequent suffering the animals endure, there are serious health and safety risks to disaster areas that are exacerbated by the abandoning of pets. Many of these problems can be mitigated or eliminated simply through the proper planning and response.



## Pet Survival Kit

- ✓ Medications
- ✓ Medical records
- ✓ Veterinarian's name and phone number
- ✓ Current photos (in a waterproof container)
- ✓ Proper identification collar, tags and license
- ✓ Sturdy leashes, harnesses
- ✓ Pet carrier
- ✓ Food and water supply for at least two weeks
- ✓ Water and food bowls
- ✓ Manual can opener
- ✓ Cat litter and pan, scoop and plastic trash bags
- ✓ Special care instructions
- ✓ Pet bed and toys

Hurricane Evacuation Identification  
"Buster" My owner is: John Smith  
Cell phone: (850) 123-4567  
Staying at: Holiday Inn, Jacksonville  
(800) 123-4567

## Evacuation pet ID tag

A pet identification tag like the one here can help locate lost pets during an evacuation.

## Arrival at destination

- Upon arrival at evacuation destination, make an identification tag for pets (luggage tags work well). If a pet gets loose, a normal tag contains home information and that won't help while evacuated
- Before walking a pet, inspect the area first and have a leash on hand to control a pet
- If in a motel, be careful during maid service. Either be there or leave the "no service" sign out
- While evacuated, spending quality time with the pet will keep it at ease in their new surroundings.
- Take walks or play with them with their favorite toy

For a list of motels that accept pets in emergencies and disasters, visit  
<http://www.petswelcome.com/milkbone/map.html>

## Planning

- Ensure pets are current on all vaccinations prior to the beginning of hurricane season.
- Build a file of a pet's medical records (include shot records, past medical treatments, vet contact information, pharmacy contact information). On the folder, put the pet's current photo, medications or dosage, special diet needs and list any allergies.
- Select a few pet-friendly accommodations early so as not to fight crowds later on.
- Identify and gather all items for the pet's evacuation kit.
- Ensure pet carrier is clean, serviceable and large enough (pet should be able to stand and turn around in it).

## Evacuation kit

- Pet's medical records folder (include vet's emergency contact number, medications list and dosage)
- Medications (enough for at least two weeks)
- Carrier/cage (for each animal, tape a label with contact information to include cell phone number)
- Gym bag:
  - Food (at least three weeks worth of dry and canned)
  - Water (five-day supply)
  - Non-spill food dishes
  - Cannister or box of non-alcoholic baby wipes
  - Can opener and plastic spoon for canned food
  - Small trash bags and paper towels
  - Litter, litter pan and scoop (enough for a week)
  - Muzzle, leash, collar or harness
  - Several old bath towels
  - Brush, comb
  - Favorite toys, treats, blankets, etc.

## Evacuation sites

As of publication, the designated evacuation sites in the event of a mandatory evacuation for Eglin personnel are Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala., Warner-Robins Air Force Base, Ga., and Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga.

In the event of a mandatory evacuation, stay tuned to base media for any updates on evacuation sites.

The following are Web sites offering maps and directions:

[www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)  
[maps.yahoo.com](http://maps.yahoo.com)  
[maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com)  
[www.mapsonus.com](http://www.mapsonus.com)



## Before, during and after the storm: tips for hurricane readiness

### When a hurricane watch is issued:

- ✓ Leave homes if authorities recommend evacuation.
- ✓ People who live in a mobile home or in a flood plain should go to a designated shelter.
- ✓ Stay tuned to radio stations for up-to-date storm information location and severe weather instructions.
- ✓ Bring pets indoors.
- ✓ Secure or store loose, outside objects.
- ✓ Lower antennas.
- ✓ Board up large windows and sliding doors.
- ✓ Brace garage doors.

- ✓ Secure boats in safe area.
- ✓ Fill bathtub with water.
- ✓ Put extra ice in the freezer.
- ✓ Fill cars with gas.
- ✓ Secure valuable papers in watertight containers and carry them if evacuating.

### During a hurricane:

- ✓ Stay inside except for emergencies or ordered evacuations.
- ✓ Use telephones only for emergencies.
- ✓ Watch for falling trees, downed power lines and flooded streets.
- ✓ Keep away from glass windows and doors.
- ✓ Stay tuned to radio stations

### After a hurricane:

- ✓ Don't drive unless necessary.
- ✓ Stay away from damaged or flooded areas.
- ✓ Report any downed power lines or broken gas or water lines.
- ✓ Check refrigerated food for spoilage if power has been off.
- ✓ Make a list of any damage to individual property and take photographs if possible.
- ✓ Use emergency stored water until tap water is announced as safe to drink.
- ✓ Stay tuned to radio stations for weather conditions and up-to-date information.

# Survey: most coastal residents unprepared for hurricanes

**MIAMI** — Despite the past two historic and devastating hurricane seasons, a new regional survey reveals a dangerously high percentage of residents in hurricane-vulnerable states still aren't prepared, don't take the threat of hurricanes seriously, and have big gaps in what they know about hurricanes — even those who live within 30 miles of the coast.

Among the key findings that concerned emergency managers (of those surveyed):

- 56 percent don't feel vulnerable to a hurricane or related tornado or flooding,

- 60 percent have no family disaster plan,

- 68 percent have no hurricane survival kit,

- 83 percent have taken no steps to make their homes stronger,

- And 13 percent said they might not or would not evacuate even if ordered to leave — leaving tens of thousands of residents at grave risk.

"Katrina was quite a national wake-up call, yet it seems too many residents are still asleep," said Max Mayfield, National Hurricane Center director. "We're facing another active and potentially deadly season in just a few weeks. It's vital that residents of hurricane-vulnerable states take the threat seriously and get prepared."

That's why Mr. Mayfield and partners, the National Emergency Management Association, the Salvation Army and the State Emergency Response Team of Florida, announced the launch of the National Hurricane Survival Initiative. The initiative aims to educate residents in hurricane-vulnerable states about the risks and steps they can take to protect themselves.

In addition to an informative Web site, [www.hurricanesafety.org](http://www.hurricanesafety.org), residents can tune into two educational television programs — "Hurricane 2006!" and "The National Hurricane Survival Test" — which will be broadcast in more than 40 markets on network affiliate and cable stations.

Overall, Florida residents, who have weathered the most storms by far, and residents of southern states were more prepared and knew more about hurricanes than those in more northern states. But coastal residents, who live within 30 miles of the coast, were no more prepared nor did they fare better on a quiz of hurricane facts than those who live further inland.

"We are beginning to make progress in creating a culture of preparedness among Florida residents," said Florida Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings. "But, as the last hurricane season taught us, hurricanes are unpredictable, and no one is immune. The next target could be Texas, Alabama,

## Hurricane direct hits on Florida and its surrounding areas from 1851 to 2004

Area	Category Number					All	Major
	1	2	3	4	5		
Florida	43	32	27	6	2	110	35
Northwest	27	16	12	0	0	55	12
Northeast	13	8	1	0	0	22	1
Southwest	16	8	7	4	1	36	12
Southeast	13	13	11	3	1	41	15
Alabama	11	5	6	0	0	22	6
Mississippi	2	5	7	0	1	15	8
Louisiana	17	14	13	4	1	49	18
Texas	23	17	12	7	0	59	19
North	12	6	3	4	0	25	7
Central	7	5	2	2	0	16	4
South	9	5	7	1	0	22	8

Information provided by the National Hurricane Center

North Carolina or even New York. All these residents need to be informed and ready."

One alarming regional survey finding was how long many residents would wait before evacuating and how far they would go, factors that increase the chances of evacuees getting stuck in gridlock and caught on the road — a most dangerous place to ride out a storm. One in five said they would leave only 12 to 24 hours before a storm makes landfall, and one in three said they would drive as far as possible, trying to outrun the storm. In fact, emergency managers say residents should only go as far as necessary to find a safe shelter outside the evacuation zone.

"We need residents to know they can't outsmart, outguess or outrun a hurricane," said Craig Fugate, Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management. "Hurricane forecasts give us a warning, but these storms' direction and intensity are subject to change dramatically. People can't wait until a storm is bearing down to prepare and have a plan."

One reason for the late departure may be residents' desire to protect their homes: One in four residents said they would not begin to prepare their home until a hurricane strike was within 24 hours, leaving little time to evacuate. Of those who said they might or would not evacuate even if ordered, one in three cited "protecting their property" as the reason for staying. Ironically though, 83 percent said they had taken no steps to strengthen their homes since the last hurricane season.

Of the 13 percent of residents who said they are responsible for an elderly or disabled person, one in three had no disaster plan for them if a hurricane threatened.

The deadly threat of storm surge

was one of the most serious knowledge gaps revealed by the survey: 68 percent did not know storm surge represents the greatest potential for loss of life from a hurricane — even after witnessing the destructive force of storm surge during Hurricane Katrina. Experts say storm surge can account for deaths well inland yet 13 percent of coastal residents said they would not or might not evacuate even if ordered to do so.

The survey also revealed as many as a third of residents may not be adequately insured. One in three of those surveyed said it's been three years or longer since they reviewed their insurance coverage and an equal number said they didn't have or weren't sure if they had replacement coverage. Given the huge growth in property values in many areas, these residents may not have adequate coverage to rebuild if they suffered catastrophic losses.

In addition, more than half of those surveyed thought their insurance policies covered flood damage or weren't sure. In fact, homeowners only have flood protection if they have purchased federal flood insurance.

Emergency officials say preparation is the key, not only to avoiding damage and loss of life, but to recovery after a storm. Yet, the survey highlighted several significant barriers to a smooth post-hurricane recovery:

"Hurricane preparedness and recovery is a true partnership of individuals and families, government, businesses and relief organizations," said Maj. Steve Hedgren, a divisional commander for the Salvation Army. "If individuals think government can do it all — right down to providing their basic food, water and medicine in the first few days after a storm — they're dead wrong, and we need to change that thinking."

## Other survey results

- More than one in four surveyed said it's government's responsibility to provide water, food, medicine and shelter in the first few days after a hurricane — or weren't sure who should be responsible. Actually, officials say every resident should have a three-day supply of food, water and medicines.

- Nearly half said they would not wait for officials to declare it safe to return, but would return to a hurricane-struck area as soon as the storm passed.

- Nearly half said their employers likely would not know where they were going or how to reach them after a storm. Yet officials say recovery depends on businesses having a plan to get back into operation quickly after a storm, which requires knowing how to reach their workforce.

- 94 percent didn't know that garage doors are the structural component most likely to fail during a hurricane. Yet, garage doors can be easily strengthened at modest cost with a reinforcement kit.

- 70 percent wrongly thought most tornadoes occur within three miles of the eye of the storm. In fact, tornadoes associated with land falling hurricanes are spawned in rain bands that can occur hundreds of miles from the eye of the storm. That's a dangerous knowledge gap because it means residents may not recognize the significant inland risk associated with hurricanes.

- 81 percent did not know that storm intensity is the least reliable forecasting projection. That's significant because it means residents may not realize that a Category 1 or 2 storm could be a Category 4 or 5 at landfall.

- 50 percent still thought masking tape would help keep windows from shattering. In fact, masking tape offers no protective value at all.

- 67 percent thought candles or kerosene lamps are suggested items to use in the event of a power failure. In fact, emergency experts warn that they are significant safety hazards.



## RED CROSS RECOMMENDED DISASTER SUPPLIES

- Baby formula powder
- Batteries
- Bottled water
- Canned foods
- Disposable diapers
- Dry cereals
- Extra pair of glasses
- Extra set of keys
- First-Aid kit
- Flashlights
- Ice chests
- Insect repellent
- Instant milk
- Manual can opener
- Masking tape
- Weather radio
- Paper plates
- Paper towels
- Peanut butter
- Portable radio
- Potted meat
- Prescription medication
- List of family physicians
- Credit cards or cash
- Blanket or sleeping bags
- Style and serial number of medical devices like a pacemaker
- Important family documents
- Changes of clothing
- Snacks
- At least three gallons of sealed bottled water per person, per day
- Medicines



# Hurricane Watch

Eglin Eagle Special Supplement

## Gearing up for the next 'big one'

BY MASTER SGT.  
TIMOTHY P. BARELA  
AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS

Hurricane Ivan in September 2004 and Hurricane Dennis in July 2005 cost them millions of dollars in damages.

Then, like the rest of the world, they witnessed Hurricane Katrina devastate New Orleans and the surrounding area last year.

So, why then, would members of this Gulf Coast base welcome Hurricane Lisette, a Category 5 super storm?

Hurricane Lisette was a three-day exercise that started at Eglin May 15 and finished May 17. And while most exercises tend to bring moans and groans from many participants, this one had a different feel, according to Col. Dean Clemons, 96th Air Base Wing commander.

The colonel heads the base hurricane response force.

"Hurricane Katrina was the 'bell ringer.' It changed us," Colonel Clemons said. "It has us looking over our shoulder for the next big storm."

And now, with barely enough time to digest or recover from the enormity of the devastation Katrina caused, it is again the start of hurricane season, which runs from June through November.

"So locally we have everyone's attention," the colonel said. "There's a greater sense of urgency throughout the gulf this season to make sure we are prepared."

Colonel Clemons said they wanted to do a hurricane exercise late enough so that the information was fresh in everyone's mind as they enter hurricane season, but not too late. The exercise covers everything from evacuation and sheltering to what to pack in personal hurricane preparation kits and updating inventory lists for insurance purposes.

"An exercise like this prepares folks emotionally, mental-

ly and physically for the real thing," Colonel Clemons said. "It gives folks a greater understanding of such things as the best evacuation routes, how to communicate after a storm, water preparation and storage, and a number of other issues. Most importantly, it concentrates on how to protect life and limb."

With Eglin covering an area roughly the size of Rhode Island, even a small storm has the potential of causing millions in damages.

"As bad as Hurricanes Ivan and Dennis were to this area, they were not direct impact storms like Katrina in New Orleans, so things could get much worse," said Staff Sgt. Darren Pemberton of the 96th Civil Engineer Squadrons readiness flight.

That's why Eglin has used lessons learned from Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., another victim hard hit by Hurricane Katrina.

"After talking to the folks at Keesler, we figured out we needed more generators here, as well as a better shelter tracking system," Sergeant Pemberton said. "We also found that we needed to plan to stay in shelters for five to seven days, instead of the two to three we used to prepare for."

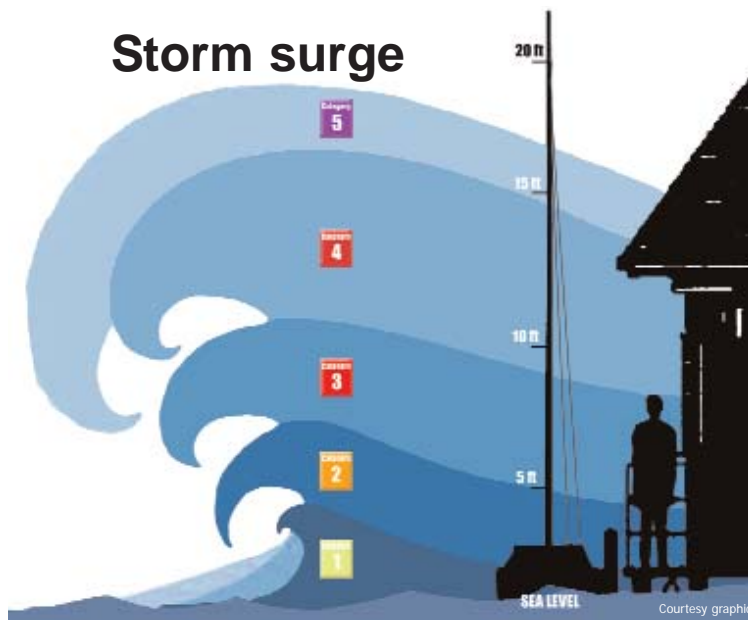
"At Keesler, people were in shelters nearly a week and started to run out of supplies," he said. "We can learn from that."

In a best case scenario, Eglin would have no storms and would enjoy a very pleasant summer and fall on the Gulf Coast.

"But what we prepare for is the worst case scenario, where a Category 5 storm hits and we have catastrophic damage," Colonel Clemons said. "At that point, the priority becomes saving souls. That's why we practice and prepare, so hopefully when the time comes, we execute our plan flawlessly and there's no loss of life or limb."

Unfortunately, the worst case

### Storm surge



Storm surge is water that is pushed toward the shore by the force of the winds swirling around the storm. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides to create the hurricane storm tide, which can increase the water level 15 feet or more.

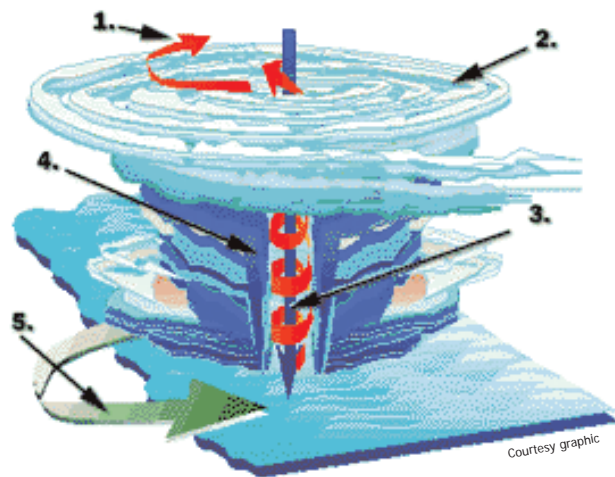
scenario is not that farfetched, said Staff Sgt. Mitchell Westlund, a weather forecaster with Eglin's 46th Weather Squadron.

"All indications are that we will have an above average season in terms of storms, so it would be a mistake to take hurricane preparations lightly," said Sergeant Westlund, who in the past two years tracked notorious Hurricanes Ivan, Dennis, Katrina and Rita.

So why this recent increase in hurricane threats?

"That's the million dollar question," Sergeant Westlund said. "A lot of experienced doctors and scientists are still trying to figure that one out. In the meantime, it puts a lot of pressure on us to formulate the best forecast we can, so we can pass along as timely and accurate of information as possible."

That information, as well as the preparations and planning from exercises such as Hurricane Lisette, might make all the difference when — or if — "the next big storm" does hit.



### Anatomy of a hurricane

(Above) The anatomy of a hurricane starts with the exhaust (1) where hot air is drawn into the atmosphere. The storm clouds in the upper atmosphere start a spiral rotation (2). As the storm continues the spiral motion, it creates an eye (3). Cool air descends into the 5 to 30-mile wide eye, creating a small center of calm weather. Just outside the eye is the Eyewall (4) where the storm's strongest winds are felt. The spiraling winds (5) in the hurricane's lower realms flow in toward the center and whirl upward. These counterclockwise winds gain speed as they approach the eye, like a whirlpool.